



FORWARD-LEANING Global Security Report



Report 11-002
22 February 2011

PROPRIETARY CLASSIFICATION: BUSINESS-IN-CONFIDENCE

FLASH: PIRATES KILL ALL FOUR HOSTAGES ABOARD YACHT QUEST

All four Americans aboard the sailing vessel **QUEST**, captured last Friday, were killed about 0100 this morning by Somali pirates. "U.S. officials were negotiating with the pirates," a DEFENSE DEPARTMENT statement indicated, when the murders took place.

Trailed by USS LEYTE GULF (CG 55), USS STERETT (DG 104) and USS BULKELEY (DDG 84) with USS ENTERPRISE (CVN 65) in company, more than a dozen pirates aboard SV **QUEST** fired an RPG at the closest warship, USS STERETT, and small arms fire aboard SV **QUEST** erupted.



Scott and Jean Adam, parishioners of ST. MONICA CATHOLIC CHURCH, load their sailboat with boxes of Bibles. (Family photo.)

When STERETT crewmen heard the gunfire, the warships responded by dispatching a boarding party that killed two of the pirates as they came aboard. While Navy corpsmen administered first-aid to the victims, all four hostages died, having been shot repeatedly by the pirates. Statement by U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND:

During the boarding of the **QUEST**, the reaction force was engaged by pirates on board the vessel. Two pirates died during the confrontation and 13 were captured and detained along with two pirates already in U.S. Forces custody. The U.S. Forces also found the remains of two other pirates already dead aboard the **QUEST**. In total, it is believed 19 pirates were involved in the hijacking of the SV **QUEST**.

Based on numerous indications from Somalia, the pirate gang that seized the yacht hailed from Xarardheere, the pirate port town that has been governed by AL SHABAAB since last April.¹ The yacht was seized by pirates last Friday in what has become Pirate

¹ "AL SHABAAB Strikes Pirates in Xarardheere." *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 10-070 26 April 2010. See also: "The 'Relationship of Convenience' between Pirates and Terrorists: Troubled but Continuing." *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 10-127 3 September 2010.

Alley Northeast, a few hundred miles off PORT OF SALALAH, Oman, where at least a dozen ships have been attacked just this year.² Murder by pirates fits the “new barbarism” in piracy noted by OSEN-HUNTER and tracked on a near-daily basis in *INSIDER*.³

• **BACKGROUND: THE “TWO TROUBLING FACTORS” OF THE SV QUEST SEIZURE.** As OSEN-HUNTER noted in Saturday morning’s *INSIDER*,⁴ there were two very troubling factors about this particular seizure: First, **Jean and Scott Adam were evangelical Catholics**, and they were aboard SV QUEST on a ‘round-the-world voyage to fulfill **the couple’s calling to distribute Bibles worldwide**.

Our Mission [is] to allow the power of the Word to transform lives. We seek fertile ground for the Word and homes for our Bibles.

Note: the fact that QUEST’s owners were evangelical Christians on a mission to distribute bibles was well known in Somalia this weekend, and we can safely presume it was known by AL SHABAAB.



A Pirate’s Eye-View. This was the pirates’ view looking after from SV QUEST. Some 600 yards astern was the USS STERETT (DDG 104). This particularly photograph, taken last month in the Pacific, shows STERETT’s sister-ship, USS GRIDLEY (DDG 101). (Public domain photo by MC2 James R. Evans, U.S.N.)

Second, **Scott and Jean Adam and their two guests were Americans.** On 13 April 2009, following the take-down of 3 pirates by Navy SEALs aboard USS BAINBRIDGE (DDG 96) that effected the rescue of MAERSK ALABAMA master Richard Phillips, a pirate chieftain identified as Cabdullahi Axmed said in Xarardheere:

We have decided to kill U.S. ... sailors if they happen to be among our future hostages.⁵

In the *INSIDER* Saturday morning, we assessed that the victims were in a “perilous situation” (*emphasis in original*):

² “Should Maritime Security Firms Rent an Office in Salalah, Oman?” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 11-013 19 January 2011.

³ **Flash:** Torture, Murder & The New Barbarism – SHABAAB-Linked Somali Pirates Strike Again.” *FORWARD-LEANING* 11-001 7 February 2011.

⁴ **Flash:** Pirates Kidnap 4 Americans, Seajacking Sailing Yacht Off Oman.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 11-030 19 February 2011.

⁵ “Threats, Tugs, and More Talk of a Somali Coast Guard.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 09-093 14 April 2009.

If that sailing vessel pulls into *any* pirate port, the threat of execution hangs over all victims aboard. However, if QUEST pulls into any ... port [near] Xarardheere [or] further south, there is an added threat: AL SHABAAB. The AL QAEDA-affiliated terrorists in the Horn of Africa [control those ports] and will make a spectacle out of a boat laden with Bibles and piloted by evangelical Christians.

The AL QAEDA affiliate in the Horn of Africa, AL SHABAAB would view Scott and Jean Adam of SV QUEST (and their two guests in all likelihood) as *Kuffars* who are guilty of *Shirk* or polytheism, the practice of ascribing companions to God, we judged: “The *Takfiri/Jihadis* of AL SHABAAB are morally obligated to kill them.”

Earlier today, the NEW YORK TIMES reported that the U.S. Navy began negotiating with pirates soon after warships began shadowing the sailboat. Negotiations continued Monday when two pirates went aboard STERETT, the destroyer aft of QUEST about 600 yards, and stayed aboard overnight. Mid-morning today local time (0100 EST), a pirate let go an RPG round, the gunfire erupted below decks and several pirates appeared on the bow of QUEST with their hands in the air. VADM Mark Fox, Commander, U.S. FIFTH FLEET, does not know why the pirates opened fire. **LOOK FURTHER.**



Surely FBI hostage negotiators with core competencies in K&R (Kidnapping & Ransom) were the ones actually doing the talking to Somali pirates, or at least at the shoulder of those talking to them. No discussion of kidnapping in Somalia is complete without touching on the case of Canadiane Amanda Lindhout and Australian Nigel Brennan. As we documented, abject incompetence cost the two journalists at least one full year of additional intolerable suffering. On the right is Nigel Brennan in 2008 shortly before he and Amanda Lindhout were kidnapped on the Mogadishu-Afgooye Road. On the left is Nigel on 26 November 2009 – after 15 months and 2 days of malnourishment, torture and solitary confinement. ⁶ (Right, family photo; left, handout photo from the TRANSITIONAL FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.)

THE QUEST MURDERS & THE ACTIVE DISPUTE BETWEEN PIRATES AND AL SHABAAB

What prompted the pirates to shoot and kill their hostages? An ongoing dispute between pirates and AL SHABAAB may shed some light.

On the very day the yacht was captured, AL SHABAAB and the pirates were embroiled in a heated meeting in Xarardheere. By the time the pirate gang off Oman had boarded QUEST and captured the four Americans, “The Lads” had stormed out of the meeting and kidnapped as many as 4 investors who actively bankroll piracy operations.

⁶ “Abject Government Incompetence Cost Somali Hostages a Year in Captivity.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 09-213 27 November 2009. *INSIDER* watch-dogged the case faithfully ever since the duo was abducted on 23 August 2008.

AL SHABAAB ayaa iyadoo ka jawaabeysa madax adayga burcad badeeda waxay toddobaadkii lasoo dhaafay xabsiga dhigeen 4 nin oo ka mid ah ragga taageera burcad badeeda oo ku sugnaa magaalada Xarardheere kuwaasoo ay ku eedeeyeen inay gacan siiyaan burcad badeeda. Ragga la xiray ayaa ganacsato a sheegay inay maalgelin jireen burcad badeeda.

Paraphrase: After AL SHABAAB had had seven separate exchanges with pirates whom they found “hard-headed” [*madax adayga*], they stole away from the meeting with four men affiliated with the pirates, “traders” [*ganacsato*] who make “investments” [*maalgelin*] in the operations of pirates based in Xarardheere. To understand what happens next, the nature of feud and dispute in Somali must be understood.

• **PRIMER: DISPUTE, DISAGREEMENT & DÉTENTE IN SOMALIA.** A dispute that ends in kidnapping is certainly a powerful disagreement, but if you look at this one with Western eyes, don’t expect to comprehend it. **Just because terrorists were fighting with pirates on Friday does not mean their relationship is irreparable. The two parties have too much to lose by parting company. In a private assessment on the feud prepared Sunday, we expressed complete confidence that pirates and “The Lads” would come together again.**

We also assessed this past weekend that if the pirates made it ashore with the hostages, AL SHABAAB would have involved itself in a direct way with the captives. After all, “The Lads” did the very same thing just 3 months ago with two South African hostages from the sailing vessel CHOIZIL. AL SHABAAB wanted in, and they got in.⁷



Residents in the coastal Somali town of Baraawe said AL SHABAAB attacked pirates as soon as they brought South African hostages Bruno Pelizzari and Deborah Calitz ashore from SV CHOIZIL. After the skirmish, *Sheikh* Maxammed Abu-Cabdalla (above), senior leader for AL SHABAAB in Baraawe and the Lower Shabelle region, ordered pirates to drop their weapons and surrender their hostages. They did so immediately. (Un-marked photo from a Somali source.)

Until recently, OSEN-HUNTER and JANE’S have been the only analysts who have consistently argued that there is a connection between *Argagixisada* (“terrorists”) and *Burcad Badeedka* (“pirates”). There is every reason to believe that relationship will persist – despite the fact that it is plagued from time to time by argument, gunfire or kidnapping.⁸ Conflict between pirates and Somali terrorists is nothing new. AL SHABAAB fought their way into Xarardheere in April of last year by battling pirates.⁹ And last year and the year before, they fought with pirates over weapons aboard tramp steamer ALMEZAAN, the most seajacked ship in the world (probably because she carries weapons that pirates and “The Lads” fight over.)¹⁰

⁷ “More Info on Pirated Sailing Yacht.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 10-158 10 November 2010. See also “AL SHABAAB Now Holds South Africans Hostage,” under “Short Bursts.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 10-164 22 November 2010.

⁸ Our first discussion of this relationship was in 2008 (“New Intel on Piracy,” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 08-049 23 December 2009), and we’ve explored it extensively ever since with about a dozen reports on pirates a month and many more on AL SHABAAB.

⁹ “AL SHABAAB Strikes Pirates in Xarardheere.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 10-070 26 April 2010.

¹⁰ “Flash: Pirate Killed – But Did Genuine ‘Private Security’ Pull the Trigger?” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 10-048 24 March 2010.

The Takeaway: since QUEST’s capture last Friday, pirates and terrorists were in a major dispute (*Khilaafka*) over the distribution of money (*lacagaba*) in situations involving *burcad badeeda ka qaataan maraakiibta ay soo afduubaan ee ay keensadaan xeebta Xarardheere* – “ships and hostages taken by pirates and brought ashore to Xarardheere.”

There were two English-language stories out on this dispute –**REUTERS** and **SOMALIWEYN MEDIA CENTER** (SMC), by different reporters – but both focused solely on what Somalis called the *Arinta koowad*, the “first matter,” namely money. AL SHABAAB *dalabaday 20% lacagaba madax furashada* – “sought a base-take of 20% of all ransom money” (SMC mistakenly reported the desired percentage as 10%).



Ashayeenka Xarakada Al-shabaab Sheekh Cali Maxamuud Raage Sheekh Cali dheere ayaa sheegatay Mas'uuliyadda weerar Istish-haadi ah oo lala beegsaday xarun lagu tababarayay ciidamo katirsan DFKMG ah oo ku taala degmada Xamar-jajab ee gobolka Banaadir. “AL SHABAAB spokesman Sheekh Maxamuud Raage (Sheekh Cali Dheere) took responsibility for Monday’s suicide attack on a police training camp operated by the DFKMG” (DOWLADDA FEDERAALKA KUMBEL-GAARKA or TRANSITIONAL FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, “TFG”). The camp is located in the “JabJab district of Xamar,” the name Somalis use to refer to Old Town Mogadishu. Twenty were killed in the blast.
(Photo from the SHABAAB website.)

Most English-language *Warbixin* (“reports”) from Somalia leave out a lot of pertinent information, however, and these were no different. They failed to mention the *Arinta labaad* – the “Second matter,” an issue that we believe may have exacerbated the situation involving SV QUEST and the 4 captive Americans:

Labadan arimood ayaa horsed u noqday in is faham waa uu dhexmaro madaxda Shabaabka iyo hogaanka burcad badeeda gobolada dhexe ee wadanka.

Or: “The second is a matter relating to command communications or command understanding [or lack of it] that exists between the head of SHABAAB and pirate leadership in the middle regions of the country.”

XARAKADA SHABAAB ay si weyn uga shakiyeen dhaqdhaqaaqyada burcad badeeda oo dhawaanahan si weyn isu hubeynaya isla markana bilaabay inay soo iibsadaan hub cusub oo fara badan si ay awoodooda ugu xoojiyaan.

Paraphrase: The YOUTH MOVEMENT [AL SHABAAB] harbors great concerns or doubts about a recent pirate action that considerably strengthened the pirate’s position or standing.

The pirate-terrorist dispute in Xarardheere was reportedly resolved sometime Monday.



Graduation Day. *Xarrakada Mujaahidiinta Al-shabaab ayaa maanta oo Khamiis ah tababar muddo hal sano ah socday ugu soo gabagabeysay deegaanka Lafoole ee gobolka Shabeellada hoose boqolaal isgu jira saraakiil iyo ciidammo loogu talagalay inay sugida amaanka ka shaqeeyaan.* “On Thursday [of last week] in Lafoole, [a village 13 miles west of Mogadishu] in Lower Shabelle administrative region, AL SHABAAB concluded training for hundreds [“boqolaal”] of officers, military advisors and security forces.” LaFoole is located along the Mogadishu-Afgooye corridor. (Un-marked photo from a Jihadi source.)

Assessment: While by no means certain, it is likely that the “recent pirate action that considerably strengthened the pirate’s position or standing” was the abduction of the 4 American missionaries and the yacht that flew the U.S. Ensign. As we outlined earlier, *Argagixisada* (“terrorists”) and *Burcad Badeedka* (“pirates”) each have their own reasons for killing American hostages. We assess that the question of whether to kill these particular hostages or seek a ransom payment for their safe return was center-stage during the heated arguments in Xarardheere.

Continued disagreement over the dispute in Xarardheere may have led to pirates killing two of their own at sea in QUEST. While we’re not married to the idea, AL SHABAAB certainly could have insisted that the hostages be killed as a sign of faith by pirates in the new resolution – or be killed themselves when they reach Xarardheere. That would explain why several of the *burcad badeedka* appeared on the bow of QUEST with their hands up. Whether they were complicit in the murder of the Americans or staged a mutiny, they preferred the U.S. criminal justice system to *Shari’u* Law as administered by “The Lads.”

The callous murder of 4 retired people out to brighten a dark world is a tragedy of many dimensions. It is the latest act of savagery that comes just weeks after VADM Fox, COMFIFTHFLT, suggested to the WALL STREET JOURNAL that he wanted to apply greater military pressure – “the same kind of rigor in the counter-piracy mission as we have in counter-terror.”¹¹ It comes as Somali pirates are using more and more pirated vessels – even supertankers – as mother-ships to attack other vessels, thus radically expanding the hazard zone from the Mozambique Channel¹² to the Maldives.¹³ **By using seized vessels crewed by hostages, pirates have effectively put the world’s strongest navies in check.**¹⁴

And while QUEST was by no means a commercial vessel, the tragedy today is a loss to those in the maritime industry who insist that bowing down and not fighting back is a safe course – at a time when the industry still has not admitted the extent to which AL SHABAAB

¹¹ “The Money Quote: Not a ‘Higher Level of Lethality,’ But...” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 11-018 28 January 2011.

¹² “Piracy Shifts Toward Tanzania & Mozambique.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 11-001 1 January 2011.

¹³ “Somali Pirates Hang a Shingle Over the Maldives.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 10-175 15 December 2010.

¹⁴ “Pirates: Transforming the North Arabian Sea into a Somali Lake.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 11-014 20 January 2011.

terrorists are involved in pirate attacks, ride herd over pirates from Xarardheere southward and have as many as a dozen ships under their control.¹⁵

By far the most significant factor in piracy off Somalia – the most insidious and deadly game-changer – is the ever-increasing role played by the AL QAEDA affiliate in the Horn of Africa. From its capture of Xarardheere in April¹⁶ to the seizure of MV ASPHALT VENTURE last September and the domination of the group by Abdullah Muhammad Fazul Husseine *Mullah Ati*, Commander of AL QAEDA IN EAST AFRICA, **AL SHABAAB is the game-changer in Somali piracy.**¹⁷



A photo of the “Junior ROTCs” of AL SHABAAB, students at a Qura’nic school who participated in the graduation ceremony in Lafoole last week. They all wear shirts with the logo of XARAKAT AL-SHABAAB AL-MUJAHIDEEN (“YOUTH WARRIOR MOVEMENT”), and all are in the *Mujahideen* pipeline. Note the masked warriors in the background. (Un-marked photo from a Somali source.)

When pirates kow-towed to The Lads’ demands on Monday to get their abducted investors released, it was a sign that pirates themselves recognize that the *Argagixisada* is the dominant force. After all, as they admitted to **REUTERS**: “we have no alternatives other than agreeing to AL SHABAAB demands.”

¹⁵ The most recent reference is: “Despite Mounting Brutality, Maritime Insurers Reject Professional Security.” **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 11-026 16 February 2011. Other key references include: “AL SHABAAB Involvement in the New Barbarism.” **FORWARD-LEANING** 11-001 7 February 2011. “AL SHABAAB Strikes Pirates in Xarardheere.” **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 10-070 26 April 2010. “Pirates: Transforming the North Arabian Sea into a Somali Lake.” **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 11-014 20 January 2011. See also: “News of a New Year Seajacking Suggests More Pirated Ships Under AL SHABAAB Control.” **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 11-008 11 January 2011. “Somali Pirates: From Mother Ships to Mother Flotillas.” **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 11-002 3 January 2011. “Piracy Shifts Toward Tanzania & Mozambique Channel.” **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 11-001 1 January 2011. “Somali Pirates Hang a Shingle Over the Maldives.” **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 10-175 15 December 2011. YORK was seajacked about 50 miles off Mombasa, Kenya, on Saturday, 23 October 2010, and is owned by BERNHARD SCHULTE, GMBH, the German ship management firm (17,000 employees, 700 ships, land-based centers in more than 25 countries worldwide); photo/caption page 10, **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 10-148 25 October 2010. See also: “*Flash*: U.S. Marines Land Near Xarardheere, SHABAAB-Controlled Town.” **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 11-015 21 January 2011.

¹⁶ “AL SHABAAB Strikes Pirates in Xarardheere.” **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 10-070 26 April 2010.

¹⁷ “**Assessment**: First AL SHABAAB Sea-jacking May Have Occurred.” **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 10-136 30 September 2010. An indicator of The Lads’ presence in Baraawe: the port town was the location of the special forces raid in September 2009 that took out Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan. A key fighter in the 1998 East Africa embassy bombings and mastermind of the attempted assassination of SECSTATE Hillary Clinton in 2009, Nabhan fought alongside Al Shabaab as the consort of **Abdullah Muhammad Fazul Husseine Mullah Ati**, Commander of AL QAEDA IN EAST AFRICA. See: “*War Deg Deg Ab!* Foreign Inursion into Somalia Just Reported.” **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 09-175 14 September 2009. Two days after Nabhan was killed, *Afbayeenkii bore ee Xaraku Shabaabul Mujahidiin* Muqtaar Roobow Cali (*Abu Mansuur*) [“AL SHABAAB spokesman Mukhtar Roobow (*Abu Mansuur*)”] pledged to retaliate for Nabhan’s death and threatened *Madaxweyne* (“President”) Barack Obama. From: “*Special Report*: AL SHABAAB Threatens POTUS, Tells “Muslim Fighters ... Come to Somalia.” **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 09-176 16 September 2009. See also: “Plot to Assassinate SECSTATE Foiled in Kenya.” **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 09-172 8 September 2009.

Somalis are “a fierce and turbulent race,” observed anthropologist I.M. Lewis who literally wrote the book on Somali culture and a proud people he described as “warlike ... who readily engage in battle ... in a society where ... feud and war are instruments of power politics.”

Somali culture is hardly dominated by proverbs, but it is certainly influenced by them, and one proverb appears apt for today:

Buur abaw ama buur kutiirsanaw.

“Either be a mountain or attach yourself to a mountain.” As formidable as they are, Somali pirates have attached themselves to a mountain called AL SHABAAB.



In Coronado, California, last week, students from BASIC CREWMAN TRAINING (BCT) CLASS 68-1 participated in a swimmer surf passage exercise at NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS BASE CORONADO. Surf passage is one of many physically demanding evolutions that are a part of Special Warfare Combat-Craft Crewmen (SWCC) training. It was likely SWCC crewmen who piloted the boats that responded to gunfire aboard SV QUEST today. (Public domain photo by MC2 Kyle Gablau, U.S.N.)

PROPRIETARY CLASSIFICATION: BUSINESS –IN- CONFIDENCE
TURN TIGHTER, GO FASTER, LOOK FURTHER™

© 2009 All rights reserved. International copyright secured. *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER*, a proprietary business-in-confidence report, is the exclusive property of Osen-Hunter. Forwarding, duplicating or quoting all or portions of the document is prohibited unless expressly authorized by Osen-Hunter. We will respond to all requests for use as promptly as possible. Email tomwyld@osen-hunter.com and reaeveritt@osen-hunter.com with such requests. We will also welcome your input and suggestions. To the best of our knowledge, all copy and images are either public domain, not copyrighted, licensed by creative commons, or used in accordance with the fair-use doctrine. We make no assertions on the veracity of situations and individuals described and forward them to readers to enhance threat awareness only. Assessments and forecasts cannot be considered absolute but are based on the best (and almost always limited) information available at the time and are forwarded to Osen-Hunter family, friends and clients as our best estimate of situations described. We offer this information without any warranty of any kind, express or implied. Neither the contributor(s) nor Osen-Hunter guarantees the accuracy or completeness of any information contained herein and neither Osen-Hunter nor any contributor is responsible for any error or omission or for the results obtained from the use of such information, nor shall they be liable or responsible to any person or entity for any loss or damage caused, or alleged to have been caused, directly or indirectly by the information or ideas referenced or suggested herein.